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FOR G/IWI AND EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: CYPRUS NOMINEE FOR THE SECRETARY'S AWARD FOR
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF COURAGE

REF: STATE 99729

1. Per ref tel. action request, Embassy Nicosia nominates anti-TIP activist Ms. Mine Yucel for the Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage. For further information regarding this nominee, please contact Embassy's Bicomunal Program Coordinator Juliette Dickstein, dicksteinja@state.gov, at (357) 22-393909, or Poloff John Rhatigan, rhatiganjv@state.gov, at (357) 22-393364.

2. NAME: Mine Yucel
TITLE: Director
INSTITUTION: Prologue Consulting, LTD
DATE OF BIRTH: 5/26/77
COUNTRY OF BIRTH: Cyprus
ADDRESS: 32 Mehmet Akif Avenue, Koskluciftlik, Nicosia, Cyprus
OFFICE PHONE: (90) 392-227-1309
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FACSIMILE: (90) 39ve abuse of hum@olated. The most tangQgue is anti-trafficking
"legislation" drafted in spring 2008 by the Turkish Cypriot authorities. Yucel was asked by the authorities to comment on this new draft "bill," which was then modified drastically based on her recommendations. The "bill" was published by the authorities in July 2008 and will soon come up for a vote.

4. Yucel has devoted enormous amounts of professional and personal time to raising awareness among the Turkish Cypriot community of the need for policy change. Yucel's efforts also exposed her to direct personal danger when she repeatedly ventured into seedy nightclubs run by criminal figures in order to interview trafficked women, nightclub managers, and clients seeking the service of the women.

5. Her work has generated unprecedented publicity and policy debate within the Turkish Cypriot community and abroad. Numerous articles appeared in the Turkish Cypriot press after the release of each of her reports, and she has discussed her findings and recommendations on Turkish Cypriot television and radio.

6. Yucel's research and advocacy in the Turkish Cypriot community have affected Greek Cypriot civil society as well. In no small part due to her efforts, the issue of trafficking of women is being discussed for the first time by the media in both communities as well as by ordinary citizens. In 2007-2008, she worked with Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot NGOs on an island-wide anti-trafficking awareness-raising campaign that brought the issue to the attention of both communities. In addition, in January 2008, upon the request of the International Organization for Migration, Yucel helped rescue a Moldovan woman who had been trafficked to the Turkish Cypriot community. Her momentous--at times shocking--findings have helped Cypriots frame the question mOglQq\Qre taboo subjects not fit for discussion in polite society. Mine Yucel has created a dynamic policy debate that would be further energized by public presentation of this award to her.
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